

Date: 1 December 2014

2015 Candlelight Memorial theme calls on leaders to support the future of people living with HIV

This World AIDS Day, 1 December 2014, the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) unveils the theme for the 2015 International AIDS Candlelight Memorial, which will fall on Sunday, 17th May 2015 – ‘Supporting the future’.

This [annual mobilization campaign](#) has been taking place every year since 1983, led by coalition of community organisations globally, and is coordinated by GNP+.

Suzette Moses-Burton, Executive Director of GNP+, says: “with the transformations being made to global AIDS policy and the development agenda, people living with HIV around the world need to unite and demand a sustainable AIDS response. Where’s the money? Where is the respect for our rights? Where is the support for community action?”

Funding commitments for the AIDS response fell from 2012-2013¹, and future funding is uncertain. Yet we are not even meeting the current needs of people living with HIV. According to some estimations, an additional 5-10% in additional financing will be needed to meet the latest World Health Organisation antiretroviral treatment guidelines.² As it is, many of us face the risk of treatment interruptions due to drug stock-outs resulting from poorly financed health systems. The global AIDS response needs to be financed.

Many of us live in social, political and legal environments that are difficult—sometimes even dangerous. This year witnessed continued criminalization of HIV non-disclosure, exposure and transmission, among people living or perceived to be living with HIV, in many countries around the world. And violence against women living with HIV showed no signs of abating.³ The upcoming targets on non-discrimination could contribute significantly to improving the quality of life of people living with HIV, but we must ensure those most marginalized in our communities are included. The global AIDS response needs to contribute to creating an enabling environment.

People living with HIV have a history of demanding accountability. As we enter this new phase of the global AIDS response, we will need to take up that role as much as ever. However, we need the global AIDS response to support the meaningful engagement of our communities in all their diversity. We can no longer accept that the failure to involve us as equals is simply an oversight. The global AIDS response needs to be fully inclusive.

¹ <http://kff.org/global-health-policy/press-release/kaiserunaids-study-finds-dip-in-donor-government->

² UNAIDS Global Report 2013.

³ <http://www.icwea.org/2014/11/16-days-of-activism-end-violence-against-women-living-with-hiv/>

“On 17th May 2015, as we honour those who have departed, let’s mobilise all people living with HIV from all walks of life to demand a sustainable AIDS response—one that funds health care, promotes human rights for all, and engages us fully and meaningfully,” says Suzette Moses-Burton.

-ENDS-

For more information, please contact:

GNP+: Victoria Clarke, External Relations & Communications Officer
vclarke@gnpplus.net
Phone: +31-20-423 4114 | Skype: vclarkegnpplus

***The Global Network of People Living With HIV (GNP+)** is the global network for and by people living with HIV. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. The vision is a powerful and united worldwide social movement of people living with HIV, with their leadership and voices at the centre of the HIV response. GNP+’s objective is equitable access to health and social services for people living with HIV by focusing on social justice, rights and involvement. This will be achieved through GNP’s purpose, which is to promote the greater and more meaningful involvement of people living with HIV in programme and policy development (the GIPA principle). For more information, please visit www.gnpplus.net. You can also connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*

***The International AIDS Candlelight Memorial** is dependent on the support and enthusiasm of community mobilisers large and small around the world. Coordinating organisations are diverse, and include networks of people living with HIV and other key populations, affected families and communities, as well as women’s organisations, service organisations, academic institutions, healthcare facilities, faith-based groups, businesses, media and more. The type of events held may vary enormously, from small community vigils to multi-day national commemorations, and many use the opportunity to promote local HIV services, encourage education and community dialogue, and advocate for the advancement of public policy. For more information, please visit www.candlelightmemorial.org.*